

3. *S. palpebralis*, anteà, p. 16.
4. *S. curtata*, anteà, p. 19.
5. *S. albicapilla*, anteà, p. 22.
6. *S. pudibunda*, suprà, p. 445.
7. *S. humilis*, anteà, p. 23.
8. *S. graminicola*, suprà, p. 446.
9. *S. virgata*, suprà, p. 446.
10. *S. flammulata*, anteà, p. 26.

7. On a Living Dodo shipped for England in the Year 1628.

By ALFRED NEWTON, M.A., F.R.S., F.Z.S.

[Received June 12, 1874.]

Having had the satisfaction, at the meeting of this Society on the 19th of May last, of exhibiting to the Members then present two original letters mentioning a Dodo (*Didus ineptus*) sent to this country by the writer of them in the year 1628, I now offer a few remarks thereon; for the short time they had been in my possession hardly allowed me then to ascertain the chief points of interest to be derived from them.

The two letters were lent to me by their custodian, John Bramston Wilmot, Esq., M.D., of Tunbridge Wells. Early in the present year a notice of the Dodo by Mr. Tegetmeier, F.Z.S. (with a woodcut from the picture formerly belonging to the late Mr. Broderip, and now in the Society's keeping*), appeared in the 'Field' newspaper. This attracted Dr. Wilmot's attention; and he immediately communicated to that useful periodical a short extract from one of these letters, which, however, was very inaccurately printed†. On reading this I at once wrote to Dr. Wilmot, who has most kindly done all in his power to gratify my wishes on the subject.

The writer of the letters was Emanuel Altham, younger brother of Sir Edward Altham, Kt., of Marke Hall, in Essex, to whom they are addressed. Emanuel sailed from England in the spring of 1626, to the East Indies, on board the 'Hopewell,' in company with five other ships, one or more of which undoubtedly bore the ambassadors, Sir Dodmore Cotton and Sir Robert Sherley, whom Charles I. was sending to the "Pot-shaugh" of Persia, and, in their retinue, Sir Thomas Herbert, whose figure and descriptions of the Dodo are well known‡. The fleet anchored in Swalley road, off Surat, on the 30th of November in that year; and soon after, the voyagers separated—Herbert going, in the ship 'William,' to Gombroon in the Persian Gulf§. It is no easy matter to glean the dates of the various inci-

* Trans. Zool. Soc. iv. p. 186, pl. 54.

† 'Field,' xliii. p. 177, No. 1104, Feb. 21, 1874.

‡ See Strickland 'The Dodo' &c., pp. 19, 20.

§ Herbert's 'Travels' &c., 2nd ed. 1638, p. 110; 3rd ed. 1665, p. 107; 4th ed. 1677, p. 102.

dents recorded in his book; but it is almost certain that he could not have reached Mauritius until 1629*, while Altham, as the letters show, was there in 1628. For the time that the two travellers were in company, however, their tales tally very well. Both mention the mortality which the expedition suffered in the Mozambique Channel, losing the Vice-Admiral, Goodall, "and many a braue gentleman beside;" both were equally struck with the amazing whiteness of the sea (a phenomenon often observed since); and both frequently name the same ships as forming part of the fleet. These facts appear equally in others of Altham's letters (a copy of which has been considerably placed in my hands by Dr. Wilmot) and in Herbert's published 'Travels.'

To come, however, to the two letters which I exhibited. They bear the same date, and were doubtless written to be sent by different hands. Both (as before stated) are addressed to the same person, and begin:—

"Right wo' and louinge brother."

The first and longest, after recounting the writer's adventures, proceeds:—

"We were ordered by y^e said Councell [of India] to goe to an Iland called y^e mauritius lying in 20^d of South latt where wee arriued y^e 28th of may: this Iland hauinge many goates hogs and coves upon it and very strange fowles called by y^e portingals DoDo which for the rareness of the same the like beinge not in y^e world but here I have sent you one by m^r perce: who did arriue with y^e ship william at this Iland y^e 10th of June."

It concludes:—

"your most louinge brother

EMANUELL ALTHAM./"

"June y^e 18th 1628

ffrō y^e mauritius."

And there is a postscript, written across the margin, as follows:—

"of m^r perce you shall receue a iarr of ginger for my sister: some beades for my Cosins your daughters: and a bird called a DoDo./ if it liue"

Its superscription is:—

"To y^e right woo' my most Louinge brother S^r Edward Altham at marke Hall, in Essex./

"Deliuier./"

The second letter ends thus:—

"You shall receue a iarr of India ginger for my sister your wife as alsoe some beades for my Cosins your daughters, and withall a strange fowle: which I had at the Iland mauritius called by y^e portingalls a DoDo: which for the rareness thereof I hope wilbe welcome to you.

"mauritius y^e 18th of June 1628: your most louing brother,

EMANUELL ALTHAM./"

* Strickland, however, says (*l. c.*) "1627."

This letter is superscribed :—

“To y^e right woo^r my most Louinge brother S^r Edward Altham Dwelling at marke hall in Essex

“Per a frend whome god preserue.

“Leaue this at one william watson’s House in y^e minories a gunsmith to be sente as aboue saide./”

As to the genuineness of these letters there can be no suspicion. Dr. Wilmot tells me that they form part of a correspondence between various members of the Altham family which a few years ago came into his charge as executor to the will of a lady connected with that family, that they have doubtless been always in safe keeping, and that they have never been in the hands of a dealer. The two letters mentioning the Dodo have been shown by me to my friend Mr. Bradshaw, the Librarian of the University of Cambridge, well known as a skilful palæographer, who, from the evidence of the handwriting, paper, and other *indicia*, chiefly appreciated by experts, declares them to be of the period to which their dates assign them.

Whether this Dodo reached England alive there is nothing to show. The only letter in the correspondence from Edward Altham to Emanuel is dated 3 January, 1628, or six months before the bird was shipped from Mauritius. Emanuel died in the fort of Armagon, on the coast of Coromandel, in 1635, having, in his last illness, had “all his p’ticular bookes of accompts and many other wrightings” burnt in his presence, as testified by a document to that effect, signed by four witnesses and now in the collection. I cannot find the name of Altham among the “Principall Benefactors” to the ‘Musæum Tradescantianum’ (1656), where Herbert’s name, on the contrary, does occur; but, as is well known, Sir Hamon Le Strange saw a live Dodo exhibited in London about 1638, and by 1634 a specimen had been given to the Anatomy School at Oxford*.

8. On the Lapwing of Chili.

By J. E. HARTING, F.L.S., F.Z.S.

[Received June 15, 1874.]

During the past few months a considerable number of specimens of the Lapwing of Chili, chiefly collected by Mr. Reed, have passed through my hands; and a tolerably good series is now before me.

On comparing these specimens with others from different localities on the eastern side of South America, as Cayenne, Bahia, and Rio, a marked difference is observable between them in point of size, the western bird being so very much larger and more robust than the eastern form.

Vanellus cayennensis, Gmelin, from Cayenne, was described by him as “*Vanello minor* ;” and if it is not invariably less than *Vanellus cristatus*, with which he compared it, the specimens

* Ann. & Mag. Nat. Hist. (ser. 2) iii. pp. 136, 137.